We claim:

1.   A method comprising:

providing goods in reusable containers, said reusable containers having RFID

apparatus attached thereto;

establishing a relationship between an RFID and a memory;

providing said goods in said containers to customers;

collecting said reusable containers from said customers; and

identifying which customers have returned their reusable containers by

electronically querying the RFIDs attached to the reusable containers collected from said

customers.

2.   Method of claim 1 wherein said establishing of said relationship comprises

storing in said memory a database including data associated with said RFID.

3.   Method of claim 1 wherein said establishing of said relationship comprises

storing in said memory an identification indicia indicative of said RFID.

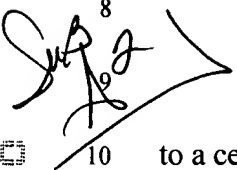4.   Method of claim 1 wherein said establishing of said relationship comprises

storing in said memory an identification of the customer to whom said container is

provided.

5.   Method of claim 1 further comprising:

1   receiving orders from customers, said orders being for goods from a plurality of

2   vendors, said orders being communicated to each of said vendors;

3   collecting said goods from said plurality of vendors at a central location;

4   providing said goods in said reusable containers;

5   informing said customers when said goods will be available for pickup; and

6   making said goods available for pickup by said customers, wherein said goods are

7   in said reusable containers.

8

9   6.   Method of claim 5 wherein said customers return said reusable containers

10   to a central collection point, said method further comprising querying the RFIDs within

11   said containers when said customers return said containers to said collection point.

12

13   7.   Method of claim 1 further comprising crediting accounts of those

14   customers who return their reusable containers, said crediting being accomplished by a

15   computer that receives the data scanned in from said RFIDs.

16

17   8.   A system comprising:

18   a memory;

19   a plurality of reusable containers, each reusable container having RFID apparatus

20   affixed thereto; and

21   a scanner for scanning the RFID apparatus affixed to said containers and tracking

22   when said containers are provided to customers and when said containers are returned by

23   said customers.

1

2   9.   System of claim 8 wherein a computerized billing system is electronically

3   coupled to the memory so that a customer can be billed if that customer does not return

4   the reusable container.

5

6   10.   A method comprising:

7   providing goods in reusable containers, said reusable containers having RFID

8   apparatus attached thereto;

9   establishing a relationship between an RFID and a memory;

10   shipping said goods in said containers to a distribution point;

11   providing said goods to customers;

12   collecting said reusable containers; and

13   identifying which containers have been collected by electronically querying the

14   RFIDs attached to the reusable containers.

15

16   11.   A system comprising:

17   a memory;

18   a plurality of reusable containers, each reusable container having RFID apparatus

19   affixed thereto; and

20   a scanner for scanning the RFID apparatus affixed to said containers and tracking

21   said containers.

22

1   12.   System of claim 11 wherein said containers are collected at a collection

2   point after they have been used to ship products, whereby said scanner scans the RFID

3   apparatus affixed to said containers at the collection point so that the location of said

4   containers can be tracked.

5

6   13   A method comprising:

7   providing goods in reusable containers, said reusable containers having an indicia

8   attached thereto;

9   establishing a relationship between said indicia and a memory;

10   providing said goods in said containers to customers;

11   collecting said reusable containers from said customers; and

12   identifying which customers have returned their reusable containers by reading

13   the indicia attached to the reusable containers collected from said customers.

14

15   14.   Method of claim 13 wherein said indicia comprise machine readable

16   indicia, said method further comprising scanning said machine readable indicia prior to

17   providing said goods in said containers to said customers, and entering into said memory

18   information indicating the containers and the customers to whom said containers are

19   being provided.

20

21   15.   Method of claim 14 wherein said indicia comprises a bar code or a

22   magnetic strip.

23

1   16.   Method of claim 14 further comprising collecting said containers from

2   said customers and scanning said indicia after collecting said containers from said

3   customers.

4

5   17.   Method of claim 13 wherein said indicia are machine-readable indicia,

6   said reading of said indicia comprising scanning said indicia electronically.

7

8   18.   A method comprising:

9   providing goods in reusable containers, said reusable containers having

10 identification indicia attached thereto;

11   establishing a relationship between that indicia and a memory;

12   providing said goods in said containers to customers;

13   collecting information on the purchasing habits of said customers; and

14   offering a reduction of shipping cost in exchange for allowing targeted

15 advertisement to be added to the reusable containers.

16

17